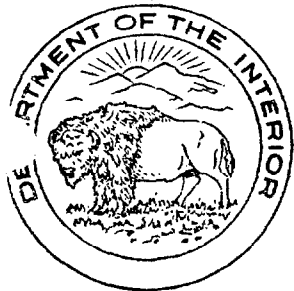


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF COORDINATION OF FISHERIES.

For Release to the
Sunday Papers of August 13, 1944.

Swordfish, expected to be a missing item in seafood markets this summer, is arriving in New England fishing ports at a rate reminiscent of pre-war days, the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries reported today.

Contrary to all pre-season predictions, approximately 160,000 pounds of swordfish have already been landed at Boston and Gloucester, and over 100,000 pounds at New Bedford and Woods Hole. The total season's landings at Boston and Gloucester are expected to reach 400,000 pounds -- the largest since 1941 at those ports.

The fleet of 30 to 40 harpooners that operated out of Boston and Gloucester before the war had been reduced to three or four boats in recent years because of the good money to be made in the rosefish and mackerel fisheries. As recently as June, it was generally predicted that landings of swordfish this year would be confined to incidental catches.

As a result of recent developments, about 8 large vessels are now operating for swordfish out of Gloucester and one from Boston, while the New Bedford swordfish fleet consists of more than 20 harpooners or about its normal size.

The revival of swordfishing has been brought about chiefly by the lack of shore plant facilities for filleting, freezing, and storing rosefish and mackerel, the Coordinator's Office explained. Swordfish, unlike these species, can be handled easily and does not require much labor for processing.

The fishery for swordfish is largely confined to the northern part of Georges Bank, which lies southeast of Cape Cod, and the "gully" between Georges and the adjacent Browns Bank. Although fishing normally begins in June, a month of foggy weather on the banks, the most profitable swordfishing is carried on during July, August, and September. Some swordfishermen formerly went as far east as the Cape Breton area, but as long as the fish are plentiful on the nearby grounds these long trips are avoided.

Harpooners out of New Bedford and Woods Hole make most of their catches of swordfish around Block Island, No Man's Land, and other southern New England grounds.

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